



Dear Editor;

In a June 16, 2008 article about DART bus service, the News Journal had an opportunity to educate and inform the public, but instead chose to take the biased viewpoint of one rider who is also suing the department on a related matter.

The main point I want to make is that DART can help you determine if riding transit works for you. If you are new to the system, one of our Travel Trainers can assist you for free in planning trips, reading bus schedules, paying fares, boarding using a wheelchair lift, and more. You can schedule a time with a Travel Trainer by calling 302-760-2858 or you can get trip planning information by calling 1-800-652-DART (3278), Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and on Saturday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

It is a disservice to the thousands of riders that successfully take public transit to characterize DART service and riders the way the News Journal did. We are not naive enough to think that the system is perfect. But the rider's trip featured by the News Journal is not typical when compared to that of thousands of riders that use and depend upon our transit system daily.

DART is not for everyone. For some, it simply is not efficient enough to meet their needs. But if there is a will to use our system, we will help you find a way. As in anything though, there are tradeoffs that each rider must balance.

In general, as it relates to the article, DART designs its services with the bulk of passenger demand and needs in mind, hence, off peak services like those featured in the News Journal are less frequent. Further, comparing Delaware's public transit to massive metropolitan systems like Washington D.C. or Philadelphia is quite a reach. However, our transit system compares favorably to others our size in the nation.

The assertion -- again by the same rider who is suing DART -- that our buses attract trouble is regretful and inaccurate. This is offensive to the good men and women that rely on our buses to get them to jobs or services. To ensure rider safety and security, we have measures in place, including cameras on buses and drivers trained to handle disruptive riders and readily call upon law enforcement when necessary.

As far as the timeliness of bus routes, DART bus drivers do their best to keep buses running on our published time schedules. There are many factors that could contribute to a bus being late, but we still operate 95 percent on time.

I would challenge new users to give DART a chance, and see for yourself if riding public transit is for you. With more and more people choosing DART bus and train service we know that riding DART is more convenient than sitting in traffic congestion, more convenient than paying high gas costs, and even a more convenient way of getting there. Go to www.dartfirststate.com

Sincerely,
Stephen Kingsberry,
Executive Director, Delaware Transit Corporation

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